10: d'Orleans--312 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 793, 796

"The hierarchy is as follows, to begin from the bottom:—

The Tiona (brethren): these are the aspirant priests or students; in many cases sent to the pagoda by their family for a brief stage.

The Tiammone (priests): these have already taken the vow of celibacy.

The Satouks, or venerables.

The Satouk Kron, or venerable masters. A priest becomes Satouk by popular election, and the people consecrate their choice by pouring the water of purification over the priest whom they have chosen.

The king alone names the Satouk Kron, who are appointed by his pouring 'royal water' over them during one of the great festivals when the idols are being washed."

10: d'Orleans--345 [3] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 527, 796

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.]

"There is great animation in the streets, nearly all the inhabitants finding their way into the main thoroughfares, shouting, buying, discussing, eating, and smoking until the religious ceremony begins. The bonzes have brought into the open all their gods, excepting the large statue at the further end of the pagoda, and proceed to put them through their toilet. The women, in the meanwhile, are visiting the pagodas, the general rule being to go to those situated in another parish to that to which they belong. The evening is spent in shouting and singing, like the last."

10: d'Orleans--346 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 527, 782, 796, 821

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.] "April 12th
As we cross the stream, we notice all along the banks tiny rafts conveying presents, notably rice, and these are offerings made by the boatmen in order that they may take plenty of fish, and be favoured by the weather while out with their boats.

In the town the statues are still out in the open, or rather they are placed under a small scaffolding, the sacred water conduit pouring out its contents drop by drop through the dragon's mouth in which it terminates at one end, while the other end is in the pagoda and is being fed by the priests, long tapers with strips of paper bearing the donor's name are burning before the altar."

10: d'Orleans--346 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 527, 796, 822

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.]

"In the main street we encounter a cortége which is coming from Ouate Tâte to Ouate Sieng Tong, and this is supposed to be the old year which is being thus escorted. It is curious, in this connection, to note that the old year is fetched from the west, while the new year will come from the east, but I do not know whether this is due to chance or is a matter of tradition."

10: d'Orleans--346-347 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 527, 541, 796

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.]

"The order and composition of the procession are regulated by rites of very long standing. At the head of the procession march young men with flowers in their hands, then two rows of bearers of red and white umbrellas for the temple, behind them coming six or eight men carrying upon their shoulders one of those gilt chairs which are used in the pagodas as pulpits, and upon which one of the principal bonzes is seated. He is accompanied by two guards, who have in their hands [347] a bamboo with a mat at the end of it shaped like a lotus leaf. Following him comes a cortége of bonzes and students in yellow, belonging to six pagodas, singing in chorus or making response to one another, while at an interval of about fifty yards, a number of young girls march in regular order, the smallest coming first. They all have a yellow scarf over their dress, and each has a parasol according to her size, from the tiny European sunshades to the vast Chinese umbrellas of oiled paper, and each of them carries a silver jar full of flowers for the pagodas or of water for the libations. Picturesque as this spectacle is, it is not the most curious part of this 'festival of the women ' as it might well be called."

10: d'Orleans--347-348 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 527, 783, 796, 823

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.]

"Women sprinkle water over the chief bonze, and others bolder still, come and pour the contents of their jar over some young student. This custom of sprinkling or pouring water, which is also to be met with at certain festivals in Siam and Burmah, would not be so suprising if it were confined to the priests, but here the girls pick up mud and plaster the faces of the young men, whoever they may be, and our white dresses tempt them so much that we are obliged to assume a very stern look in order to keep them at a distance. The young men, however, are too gallant to resent these attentions, and as for the bonzes, they get something better than water offered them, as presents are made them in the shape of pans full of food, which are handed to two men who accompany the chair.

When the procession reaches Ouate Sieng Tong, it enters the courtyard, and the bonzes, after reciting [348] the usual prayers, enter a sort of shed surrounded by planks and having upon the top the same water conduit which has been used for sprinkling water over the gods. The women pour their water into this conduit, which flows down over the priests, who emerge from the shed purified and washed, but dripping wet, though this they do not seem to mind."

10: d'Orleans--348 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 532, 527, 773, 796

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.]

"The dances begin, and two men emerge from the pagoda enveloped in vast cloaks coming down to their heels which are meant to designate the skin of some wild animal, while they have on their heads a mask of black wood representing some monster with enormous eyes, large mouth with very sharp teeth, very long ears and a lower jaw which can be moved at will. Behind the head is a long mane of coarse hair, and we are told that they are known as Pi Konge, or devils with a cruel face, while the old bonze says that they are the chiefs of the tigers, or the Pi Sua (race of devils). The Siamese Colonel adds that in the Laos they are known as Pou Yen (from Pou, father) or Ya Yen (from Ya, mother), and there is a legend that men of this kind once lived in a large forest, and that though they inspired great terror two of them were captured, these monsters representing the captive pair. It is interesting to compare this native tradition with the assertion of several travellers that the Laos was formerly inhabited by a hairy race of men."

I0: d'Orleans--348-351 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 171, 527, 535, 796

[LSS: During the New Year celebration in Luang Prabang.]

"Whatever be the origin of these two 'monsters,' [LSS: dancers in masks] they seem to amuse the crowd very much, and when after having knelt in front of the pagoda and wished the spectators a happy new year, they begin to dance, I am surprised beyond measure to find that it is the [pages 349 and 350 contain illustration] [351] self-same dance which I saw when travelling through Thibet with M. Bonvalot two years before. The steps and the attitudes are exactly the same, and it would be interesting to know whether this is a mere chance or due to the existence of the same traditions between peoples living so far apart. The tam-tam, which is beaten by hand, without any rhythm, is the music used as an accompaniment, and from time to time the monsters make a charge and send the crowd flying, one of them chasing a young girl round a tree. I can see only Laotians among the spectators, the Kas holding aloof. When the dances are over, the procession starts on its way back, the priests being escorted back to their several pagodas."

10: d'Orleans--379 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 796

"At sunset we assist at the religious service of the priests. The old bonze strikes the gong, letting it vibrate slowly and softly, and there is something sad about the ceremony. With Europeans, when a gong is used, it is beaten so as to make the most noise possible; but we do not know how to produce these plaintive and sadly eloquent sounds.

After a few short strokes to summon the pupils, the priest, accompanied by his bonzillons, recites the prayer in grave and leisurely accents, a deep silence ensuing."

23; Franck--321-322 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians-1-2
116, 644, 527, 796

"There are ceremonial occasions when the king comes to the home of the commissaire, not by Ford but on an elephant, and is carried up the steps seated on his throne, white parasols over him and a great retinue about him. The French residents condoled with me particularly because I had not reached Luang Prabang quinze jours--a fortnight--earlier. For in the Kingdom of the Divine Buddha New Year's [322] had fallen on April 12 that year, and with it comes the ceremony of the petit serment, as distinguished from the grand serment in November; that is, the swearing of fealty to the French and to the king--please note the order. Then the king rides on several elephants, I gathered, though probably only one at the time, and is carried through the town on his throne, followed by long processions of notables and mandarins in white jackets and sampots of every color of the rainbow, if not indeed several which it lacks. The common people, all the inhabitants of the capital except the Annamese and the French, kneel and bow their heads to the earth, for then they must not look upon their king, though it is said a few of the least reverent sometimes do get a glimpse à la dérobée. To judge by the pictures French residents had taken of the recent ceremony it was a sight worth coming two weeks earlier to see. In them all the inevitable cigarette was dangling from the king's lips; no ceremony is so solemn, no place so sacred, that Tiao Sisavang Vong Somdet Prah will go without his smoke. As many a photograph of the few remaining

European monarchs and their possible successors shows, he has good precedent for thus openly indulging. Perhaps it is a sign of increasing democracy, or such informal and plebeian habits may always have been shared by kings, though our expurgated histories do not mention them. Cigarette or Ford, however, the people of Luang Prabang take their king very seriously, more seriously than he does himself. The native doctor at the government hospital, educated in Hanoi and outwardly entirely French except in complexion, kneels and touches his forehead to the floor before he gives medicine to one of the king's sons in the palace nursery."

25: Brodrick--99-100 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians-1-2
116, 527, 535, 796

"...it is difficult to spend only a few days in the Laos without living a Laotian feast-day. Take the Boun Dueun Ha, that is the New Year festival, and also that of the Little Oath (of allegiance that is). The festivities are held at the beginning of April, thus at the time of year when the days are hottest and the nights most suave.

In every village there will be a procession headed by youths bearing branches of flowers. Then will come two files of men carrying the sacred umbrellas. Afterwards six or eight men bearing upon their shoulders a palanquin, in which sits the chief of the local pagoda. The monks and their acolytes holding urns full of flowers and jars filled with lustral water, bring up the rear. So far, so good, it all seems an orderly and decent religious procession.

But as the cortège advances, the women on either side of the way throw buckets of water on the processionists, while the girls pelt them with mud. When the cortège has reached the pagoda, the whole people stand round joining in the antiphonies of praise sung in honour of the Blessed One and then fall back in a circle to watch the dances.

And these dances are not at all Buddhist. There are three main performers. There is the dragon Sing, and there is the Ngo Gneu, and then there is the Pou Gneu. These two last represent 'ancestor' spirits and their impersonators wear curious masks and their bodies are covered with beasts' skins. The wooden masks are black and swathed in streaming hair which twirls as the dance moves on. Pou Gneu has a pumpkin-like

face with a huge toothy, grinning [100] mouth such as you may see in a Hallowe'en goblin. And the ancestors' ghosts come back to plague men in animal guise."

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

A DRAGON APPARENT

000 There was a recognized place about a mile up the river, which was free from weed and rock, and once again, because the water was deep and swiftly running, it was very cold and refreshing. We had
515 been swimming round for an hour or so when we noticed a number of Laotian girls hanging about. They were not watching us, but sauntering backwards and forwards in twos and threes, chatting to each other. By the time there were twelve of them, Dupont, keeping well in the water called to them and asked if we were disturbing them in any way. One of the girls came to the edge of the bank, bowed, and looking down at her feet said that it was their usual bathing time, but that there was no hurry, of course. Dupont asked the girls if they would retire for a moment, and they walked a short distance away and stood in a preoccupied circle while we got out of the water. We then dressed quickly and walked on down the path leading to their village. After about a hundred yards we looked back. All the girls, quite naked, were in the water. At that moment two bonzes were strolling slowly along the bank past them; but the girls paid no attention. The bonzes were wrapped in the mantle of holy invisibility.

622 When we reached the village, Dupont asked punctiliously for
304 the headman, making the excuse that he wanted to visit the pagoda. It was quite evident that this headman was in the good graces of the garrison, and probably supplied them with labour. He was very dignified and had a fine house, with European furniture. Although barefooted, he wore a French suit. On the suggestions of the soldier from the camp he took down his trousers and showed us his legs, which from ankles to thighs were tattooed, in the local manner, so
• 796 closely that he seemed to be wearing stockings. The annual *boun*[1]
782 had just been celebrated at the local pagoda and a bonze was in the
532 act of sweeping into a heap the votive offerings with which the floor
285 of the courtyard was littered. There was a great collection of elephants, buffaloes, peacocks and tigers, all woven in basket-work. The kind of thing that Picasso produces when he is not painting, but perhaps rather better. They seemed to me to be of

[1] [i.e., religious festival.--Analyst]

69: Lewis T-5 (1950) 1951 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

the greatest artistic interest. I asked the headman if it would be possible to take any, as the bonze was crumpling and smashing them vigorously with his broom. But the chief shook his head regretfully. Buddhism had degenerated in these remote provinces and was swamped with re-emergent spirit cults. These objects had been dedicated to the *phi*[1] and would have to be burnt in a ritual fire. The *phi* would also receive the burnt essence, I noticed, of a large, very obscene, and no doubt magically valuable picture.

At about this time when the bonze was treading underfoot the village's artistic output of several months, a party of Issarak or Viet-Minh, timing their action to coincide with the convoy's arrival at Moung Kassy, had set fire to the forest just south of the post. A steady breeze was blowing from that quarter, and the fire, started over a width of about a mile and fanning out as it advanced, moved slowly towards the fort.

Coming up over the river bank it took us some time to realize what was happening. There was a haze; but then there was always a haze in Laos, although by this time of day it should have been clearing and not thickening. And then we heard the crackling, punctuated with the sharp pops, which might have been distant rifle fire, but which were the explosions of thick stems of bamboo. Looking up then we saw the curtain of smoke hanging over Muong Kassy, white at the top, and black at its base and streaked occasionally by lance-points of flame, which were still two miles away.

We ran to where the car was parked, started it and tried to drive down the road towards the fire. Dupont was as pleased with it as July 14th. In about fifty yards we got tangled up with the convoy and had to leave the car on the side of the road and run on. The fire was advancing on a ragged front and was as irresistible as a volcano. Black smoke was being blown before it so that at first the flames were out of sight; but when they came through they were two hundred feet high – twice the height of the tallest tree. It went forward in zigzagging rushes; eating its way quickly through the bamboo

[1] [i.e., spirits. – Analyst]

369 Anou had built the new temple of Sisaket not far from the deconse-
175 crated Prakeo "with the purpose of attracting the grace of Heaven
/346/ to the souls of his parents as well as to those of all his relatives and to all the souls which people Hell and the world" (2). The corner-

2. Cf. inscription on the stele.

stone was laid on "Thursday, the ninth day of the waxing moon of the year Kap-San" (1824), in the midst of a large assembly of the populace.

778 Inauguration of the temple of Sisaket (1824). On this occasion
796 the king made innumerable gifts to the bonzes (clothing, sandals,
346 fans, iron pen points to write on latania leaves, mats, mattresses,
175* copper betel services, rice baskets, vases, metal drinking cups, carafes, goblets, etc.). He gave /163/ pieces of cloth to the poor, and generous bounties to artisans and musicians. The people walked in procession around the royal palace, carrying oriflammes and effigies of animals which were flowered and perfumed with incense. The holiday lasted three days, to the accompaniment of general rejoicing (1).

1. Ibid. /Inscription on the stele./

346 This temple was the only one which the French found still standing when they reached Vientiane. Of the first enclosure there remain two 'thats', which have recently been restored, and an elegant square pavilion-library whose quadruple pinnacled roof is supported by a graceful colonnade. Three other pavilions have disappeared (2).

2. A bath pavilion, one for worship and one for the tom-toms and gongs.

A cloister pierced by a porch on each side surrounds the central sanctuary, the outer gallery of which discloses a gateway and finely worked windows under the triple porch roofs. The inside walls are
/532/ illuminated by frescoes surmounted by many niches in the form of lotus leaves where thousands of statuettes are grouped in pairs. A wooden ceiling is embellished with gilded panels, and on the altar stands a giant Buddha entirely covered with gold leaf.

It was in this holy place that Anou received /164/ his subjects' 796
and vassals' oaths of fidelity twice a year up until 1827. The 643*
ceremony was continued, after his downfall, in honor of the king 175*
of Siam. Nowadays it takes place in April and November of each
year and the oath, accompanied by prayers from the bonzes, is
addressed to the president of the French Republic in accordance
with the traditional formula: "May any one of us who breaks this /695/
oath be devoured by the tiger, may he be struck by lightning, may
his soul burn in blazing flames... etc." (1).

1. A monastery was recently built near the cloister, which 792
has been transformed into a museum. A center of religious
learning has been revived there by the leader of the bonzes
who is presently in charge of it.

Voyage to Bangkok (1825). In the meantime Anou kept closely 643*
informed of the events which were transpiring in the west of the 648*
Indo-Chinese peninsula. In the south the Siamese had come to 175*
grips with the Annamites in Cambodian territory, and in the north
the British in India were extending their sphere of action towards
Burma in a way which was disturbing for the Thai regions of the
basin of the Salouen and the Upper Menam. In 1825 he went to
Bangkok to attend the funeral of king Phan-Dinh- /165/ /Page 165
is devoted to an illustration: "Square of the temple of Sisaket at
Vientiane."--Translator/ /166/ Klang, and there he learned that
a British delegation had entered into ticklish negotiations with the
government of the deceased king and that the intransigence of the
English was causing the greatest difficulties at the court. He profited
thereby in order to ask permission to repatriate to his country the
Laotian families who had been taken captive in the course of the
preceding century, but was given a categorical refusal (1).

1. He was told that the Laotian families had been settled
in Siam for too long a time not to have become completely
Siamese. Cf. H.R.H. Phanuphanthuvongswardja, op. cit.
/Repression de la revolte de Vientiane. Bangkok, 1926./

Hiding his disappointment, he regained his capital greatly dis- /721/
contented. The following year, when the rumor reached Vientiane
that the Anglo-Siamese parleys had been broken off and that a

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[171] The Laotian era began in 638 A.D. In 1900 it is entering the second year of its twenty-second sixty-year cycle. It is numbered 1262, and called Kaute-Pi-Tkiaî or Pi-Xuèt-Tho-Sok. Since the series of years in the ten-year cycle becomes exhausted before that of the twelve-year cycle, the sign Kate or Eka of the first is added to the sign Sète or Pi-Tio of the second in order to provide a name for the eleventh year which begins a new ten-year period. This combining of names continues thus for a period of sixty years, at the end of which the first two signs of each cycle once more occur together.

Laotian holidays. Laotian holidays are at once religious and civil. Fairly numerous, since there are ten of them each year, they all begin with ceremonies in the pagodas, and in almost all localities the bonzes are the organizers, the impresarios, the decorators and the artificers.

The chronological year begins in the fifth month (March or April). Here are the names and a description of the holidays which succeed one another almost every month, and the first of which in date is that of aspersion or of the new year, lasting seven days.

"The first day of this series of holidays may rather be described as a day of purification. Early in the morning the streets of Luang-Prabang fill with people in holiday dress who go to the market to buy live animals, especially fish and birds. Towards four in the afternoon they go to the little islands which the low water has left uncovered in the middle of the river and set free the animals purchased that morning by plunging them once again in their respective elements, the fish in the water and the birds in the air. The purpose of this touching custom is to obtain pardon for sins committed during the year which is drawing to a close. In the evening the bonzes are invited to come and pray in private homes. They are presented with cooked rice, fruit, cakes, flowers and wax candles.

"During the six days which follow everyone is in a joyous state. People exchange visits and good wishes, and attach cords of cotton to form bracelets to one another's wrists as good luck pieces.

"The statues of Buddha are not forgotten. Cotton strings, usually adorned with strings of flowers, are also attached to them.

"In each pagoda the statues of Buddha are taken down from the altar and placed on the squares before the pagodas in niches forming low kiosks, where all the [172] faithful come and sprinkle them with

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perfumed water in the hope of being cured of the ills from which they suffer. In the course of the day water is sprinkled now on the bonzes, who go forth in palanquins to pay each other visits, and now on the King, the great men and the native officials, who pass back and forth through the city for two days running, some on elephant back and the others in sedan chairs.

"Although the water used in sprinkling the bonzes and the King is generally clean and perfumed, the same cannot always be said of the water used to sprinkle the kingdom's great men and officials. Every day until four in the afternoon, the young girls try to douse the young men who pass by and to smear their faces black. The young men do not sprinkle the girls, but may try to smear them with black too.

"After four in the afternoon the people get flowers and use them to decorate the pagodas. In the evening, inside the pagodas which are empty of their Buddhas, young men and women meet around the altar and Ngan (celebrations) take place each day until such time as the statue of Buddha resumes its place in the sanctuary.

"On the morning of the fourth day all the officials of the Laotian administration who have been able to come to Luang-Prabang visit the King in ceremonial dress to offer him their best wishes for the new year. After an invocation the grand master of ceremonies presents the wishes of all those present, with candles lit and flowers which each person has brought all around. Again in the name of all those present, the grand master respectfully places the traditional cotton threads around the royal wrists. Then the members of the audience come up one after the other to kneel before the king, offer him their little bouquets flanked by wax candles and touch the outstretched hand of the monarch with their inclined foreheads. This is a most picturesque manner of hand-kissing and paying homage (1).

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(1) The administration of the "little oath" or oath of the fifth month takes place during this celebration.

"Holiday of the eighth month (July). This is the entry of the bonzes into retreat (this holiday corresponds to our meat days preceding Lent).

"Each year, from the eighth to the eleventh month, the bonzes are not allowed to sleep outside the pagoda to which they are

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attached, and they are supposed to increase their prayers and pious exercises. At the beginning of this period, and until eleven in the morning on the first day, the inhabitants come and provide celebrations for the bonzes and offer them meals accompanied with music.

"Holiday of the ninth month (feast of waters and pirogue races).

"The purpose of this holiday, which falls in the very middle of the rainy season (August), is to obtain abundant rainfall from heaven. In the morning there is a great market which everyone attends in his best clothes, and in the afternoon there are races on the Mékong by the so-called racing pirogues.

[173] "Holiday of the tenth month (feast of cakes, or rather feast of the dead, September).

"In the morning of this day the inhabitants take little packages to their respective pagodas. A label is attached to each package with a small bamboo pin, and the label bears the name of a dead relative. Each package contains cakes and is destined for an ancestor or relative who has died recently. The packages are delivered to the bonzes, who recite prayers for the dead persons and eventually eat the cakes themselves.

"Holiday of the eleventh month (October, end of the bonzes' retreat, reminiscent of our Easter celebrations).

"The pagodas are lit up, and fireworks exploded. Private houses are also brightly lit.

"The inhabitants make bamboo rafts on which they place various foods, in the midst of bright lights. Great numbers of these illuminated rafts are then loosed in the current of a watercourse. The fiery fleets drifting downstream remind one of Venetian feast days with their lighted gondolas.

"Holiday of the twelfth month (November, feast of harvest and feast of waters).

"The harvest is over, and the dry season well established. This is the last in date of the year's public holidays, and also the most brilliant.

"A pirogue race takes place at this time, and also another ceremony of oath-taking (called the "great oath") at which all the officials of all the grades of the Laotian administration must be present.

"The holiday of Thiout-Bang-Fai, or feast of rockets, occurs on this date in all the agricultural centers and regions of Laos"(1).

(1) Le Laos français, op. cit. [Lieutenant-colonel Tournier

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(Superior Resident in Laos), "Notice sur le Laos français," in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

Besides these major holidays there are a certain number of others which are more religious than secular in character and which fall in between the ones dealt with above.

In the course of the sixth month (April-May), for example, a religious holiday is celebrated in memory of the first leaders of the Buddhist religion.

At the end of the eleventh month, on a date which is fixed in accordance with the rites and which varies from one year to another, a celebration takes place in the pagodas in honor of the men who first introduced Buddhism into Indo-China.

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Finally, after the twelfth month (November or December), comes the feast of penitence which applies to all the faithful. During a [174] kind of Lent which lasts for nine days, true believers must abstain from certain foods and from all sex relations.

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Since our establishment in Laos the province capitals and all the centers where Europeans live have celebrated the National Holiday on July 14 which the natives call Boun-Phi-Falang-Sète (Holiday of the French Genie) or, by onomatopoeia, Boun Ka-Tor-Yu-Yèt. [C. A. M. Translator's note. The latter term seems to be an approximation of the French Quatorze juillet ("July 14").]

MORES AND CUSTOMS

101

By reason of their diverse origins and the relations into which they have entered with neighboring peoples, as well as by the cross-breeding which has taken place, the races of Laos necessarily have characteristics, costumes, dwellings and, in a word, mores and customs which differ to a greater or less extent from one race to another (1).

(1) On this question of mores and customs we shall have recourse from time to time to a notice entitled Le Laos français which was written by the Superior Resident in Laos and based on reports and local monographs which were provided by our administrators and are in consequence authoritative.

[114

If we have consistently reproduced here extracts from the above work, this is because they provide an admirable summation

527 Those desirous of obtaining special graces give similar celebrations
182 which last several days and several nights, and the offerings are more beautiful and more varied. It is generally on occasions of this sort that assumptions of the habit by bonzes and their pupils are particularly likely to occur.

Being present at these ceremonies confers certain indulgences, and that is why they are so punctually followed and why all those who take part try [224] to help in celebrating them by offerings of all sorts.

[796] On the spot where the celebration is to be held, a sort of pulpit is constructed beforehand where the bonzes stand as they come up by turns to read passages chosen for the occasion from the sacred books. They never allow themselves to be disturbed by the surrounding noise, but stand as if transfixed in the middle of the songs and shouts.

It is readily understandable that this should be an agreeable way to procure one's salvation, but since it is very costly it is not within everyone's means. Fortunately, there are ways of compromising with [565] heaven which enable even the poorest to associate themselves in these great celebrations, in accordance with their resources, by means of even very modest offerings and to benefit therefrom both spiritually and materially.

There is no doubt but that a belief in the efficacy of plenary and partial indulgences enters into their consideration, but it is equally reasonable to suppose that the attraction of the profane pleasures which one enjoys in the course of these gatherings is not the least of the motivating causes which lead the Laotian people to frequent them so zealously.

[171] Pirogue races. We have seen that pirogue races and regattas took place during some of the legal holidays, and a few words of explanation on this matter are given below.

526 This custom must have been introduced by the Malays and then
501 handed down from the Kmers to the Laotians, following an ascending direction from south to north.

The pirogues used in the "Souang-Hua" (1) regattas are specially

(1) Literally, pirogues which run.

built and exclusively reserved for this use. Sometimes as much as twenty-five meters in length, they are hewn out of specially chosen wood and have most elegant delicate and elongated lines. Their extremities are armed with what appear to be slender gilded horns. The exterior is lacquered black with gold ornamentation and the

include all the local genii one comes across in Indochina, either under the name of Neak Ta in Cambodia, or Phi in Laos, to mention only two countries. The cult of the Phi is still very much alive in Laos, although it has long been contested by the Buddhist clergy and forbidden by an edict of Phothisarath in 1527.

[30] But there are several classes of phi. First of all there are the universal phi, those are the ones which Buddhist tradition has attempted to assimilate for better or worse.

The book of Khun Bolom says precisely that the Phi Fa (Phi of heaven) and the Phi Then are in reality Indra, and the guardians of the four worlds. The Phi Sua Muon are Nang Tholani (Dharani, goddess of the earth) and Nang Mekhala (Manimekhala, deity of the sea). Finally there is the Phi Then Ten (Visvakarman, the builder).

The local protecting genii of the kingdom of Lan Xan are the fifteen Nagaraja (Praya Nak) who are the genii of water, living in the river rapids, at the confluence of rivers, on the rocks on the river banks or in caves. Their natural form is that of a serpent, but they can also take on human form.

Then follow the familiar genii, the wandering phi (Phi Pho), and the phi of dwellings (Phi Heuan). The Phi Heuan are honored at the time of marriage, and the Laotian code prescribes the indemnities which must be paid to please the Phi. There are also the phi of parents [or relatives--Translator] (Phi Me). These are often confused with the preceding ones. Their cult is celebrated either inside the house, or outside in a small shelter built for this purpose. This little structure is usually built leaning against a tree; sometimes it contains a small statuette or a stone, or even nothing. In that case one finds only a few grains of glutinous rice, and one or two small sticks of incense in a horn made of a banana leaf. This little house is the home of the Phi. He watches the living from the beyond and manifests himself every time a member of the family behaves badly. His intervention is most often known by a sudden and serious illness. One must then try to find out what has displeased the phi. For this one goes to the "sorcerer" and he will indicate [31] the sacrifice which must be made to the phi to appease his anger."

There exist also village phi to whom honor and offerings are due at the time of every ritual or local ceremony, particularly about the seventh month. Coinciding with a sort of pause in the ordinary activity of the Laotian, a pause which is regulated by a change in season, return of the rains and the rise of the Mekong waters, the feasts of the "months of the spirits" are centered around the evocation

776 of one or several spirits who are reincarnated in one possessed. This
796 person enables the villagers and those living in the same quarter to
787 know the course of the new year and, if necessary, to improve it by means of gifts and prayers. During this time the village is forbidden to strangers (Lévy).

776 A series of particularly dangerous phi is also known; these are
775 the Phi Phetu (Sk: Preta), that is the wandering souls of people who have died in an abnormal way, by accident, suicide, childbirth for a woman, etc. These souls cannot be born again. They remain present in order to torment human beings. The Phi Houa Kout are
776 the headless phi, the Phi Khon Long are those who carry the coffins,
754 the Phi Pop have the power of entering into the body of a living human being. The unfortunate person then has the evil eye and is expelled from the village. In the region of Savannakhet, there is a village of victims of the Phi Pop which was created by a Protestant mission, in order to rescue these poor creatures who would otherwise die of hunger, for they are forbidden to enter any village.

The Phi Phong are the spirits of human beings who have studied the formulas to acquire magic powers but have not conformed strictly to certain rites prescribed by their studies. They are bloodthirsty and go out at night by the light of the fire [32] which issues from their nostrils along the banks of rivers and streams, and of ponds, to catch fish and toads. If one meets a Phi Phong, one must flee for he can spit in one's face, and then one may become a Phi Phong oneself.

776 The Phi Kong Koi lives in the mountains and has the shape of a monkey. During his existence on earth he was the servant of a Vietnamese. One day, having been too badly treated, he decided to escape. But in order not to be caught, he camouflaged his footprints by putting his heels in front and his toes behind. The Vietnamese, deceived by this trick, went off in the opposite direction
[198] and never found him. In our days when the Laotians want to chase away the Phi Kong Koi, the speak Vietnamese to each other. But if one is traveling in the mountains, one must refrain from lighting a fire or cooking any fish or meat or crabs, for the odor attracts the phi who wants to come and eat. His victim would have his intestines split open. The approach of the phi is always preceded by a violent storm and a torrential rain. There are said to be a great many Phi King Koi in the region of Samneua.

There is, however, another kind of Phi. This one seems to have a particular hatred for archaeologists. These are the phis who inhabit sculptures or the tumuli which are found in the bush [en brousse]. But that is another story...

805 [34] The Days.

The Laotian week follows the same order as the French week:

Van Athit	Sunday
Van Tian	Wednesday [sic]
Van Ang Kam	Tuesday
Van Phut	Wednesday
Van Phahat	Friday [sic]
Van Souk	Monday [sic]
Van Sao	Saturday

The Hours.

The day is 24 hours long and is divided into 16 ngam (periods of an hour and a half each).

•796 All the Laotian feasts are dated according to this calendar. The Buddhist feasts are listed in a manuscript of the Vat Pra Keo called Hit Sip Song Khong Sip Si.

THE BOUN (Sk. punya)

796 Every newcomer to Laos will quickly learn to recognize the
788 word boun. Literally this term means "to obtain merits, to give alms," but by extension, it designates the ceremony or feast which accompanies this act. Its meaning has degenerated rather quickly and to "make a boun" means "celebrate a feast."

The religious boun consists essentially in presenting offerings of candles, flowers, etc. to the images of Buddha and gifts to the bonzes after having accomplished the pradakshina or ritual "circumambulation" of the pagoda with lighted candles. This pradakshina is an ancient Brahmanic rite which consists in turning around a funeral pyre or a monument, keeping it always on the right.

Feast of Khao Chi (See below after the feast of the harvest).

796 Makha Bousa (Feast of the third month).

[35] The first religious feast of the Laotian year is that of the "Makha Bousa." It takes place on the fifteenth day of the crescent moon of the third month (end of January to middle of February).

This is the origin:

"Near Vaisali in the country-town of Belouva, a serious illness attacked the Buddha, and he was near death. Then he thought of his

796 disciples: "It is not proper that I should enter Nirvana without having conversed with those who have taken care of me, without having spoken to the community of disciples." After he had spoken to them, he received a visit from Mara, the Buddhist demon, to whom he said: "Do not worry, oh Malin, [perhaps= oh wily one--Translator] in a short time it will be the Nirvana of the Perfect one, in three months I will enter into Nirvana."

It is the memory of this reunion of disciples which the Laotians celebrate during the feast. This ceremony is the classic boun with alms to the bonzes, candles, small stick of incense, etc.

Boun Pha vet.

796 This boun may take place from the third Laotian month on. Once
346 a year, each pagoda in turn organizes a great feast. The day before, the pagoda is filled with bonzes who have come from very far away to hear the reading of this edifying story, while the young people arrive during the night to pay court to the young girls. By six o'clock of the next morning, the reading begins and only ends at nightfall. At half past seven the offering of food is made to the bonzes, then the recitation of an act of grace. After which the venerables continue the reading of the Phat Vet until the evening, taking turns at regular intervals. In the courtyard of the pagoda, a pedestal has been erected especially for the ceremony. In the center of this rises a preaching pulpit made of a banana trunk which is carved all over and surrounded by draperies on three sides in order to [35] mask the public from the bonz At the base of the four pillars supporting the pulpit, four urns of perfumed water are placed, covered with a banana leaf, and between them in the center there is a bag of paddy and a basket of salt. Along the walls of this temporary hall is displayed the history of Pha Vet painted on cloth. Each reader receives a basket in which the offerings are fancily arranged. At the end of the reading of each chapter all the listeners throw a handful of grilled rice afar. Outside at the four cardinal points small altars are erected with offerings of rice. To the east, in a secluded spot, stands a larger altar which is covered and in which are placed a miniature mat and mattress, some pillows, small sticks of incense, candles, rice pellets, flowers, a tea pot and a bowl for alms. This altar is for the reception of Pra Upagutta who will protect the feast from the malignant influences of Mara (Cf. B.E.F.E.O. 1904: Mara and Upagutta).

This story is often represented in the pagoda paintings, particularly in the Vat May at Luang Prabang.

796 Pha Vet is the Laotian name of the Vessantara Jataka which is
773 the story of the last former life of the Buddha.

"Prince Vessantara, a pious Buddhist, gave many alms. In his kingdom lived a white elephant who had the power to make rain fall at will. A Brahman from a neighboring country asked him for this elephant. The charitable prince made him a present of it. The people, who were displeased, went to find the king and ask him to exile the prince. The latter was sent into the forest with his family, but on his way to his rustic hermitage he met various people who begged alms of him. He gave away successively his wagon, his horses, his children. Finally he made a gift of his wife to the god Indra who, disguised as an ascetic, had [37] asked him for her in order to prove his generosity. Then Indra gave him back his wife, while the children were returned to the king their grandfather by a brahman. With the help of his grandson, the king was able to find the prince and his wife and bring them back to the kingdom where everything came to a happy ending. After his death Prince Vessantara became a Buddha."

It should be noted in connection with this story that, according to the Chinese pilgrim Hiuan-Tsang who visited India in the seventh century of our era, the town of Po-Lou-Cha (at the present day Shahbaz Garhi, a few tens of kilometers northeast of Peshawar) became in its time the place where the framework of Vessantara Jataka was supposed to be. Numerous Graeco-Buddhist bas-reliefs illustrating this legend have been discovered there.

796 Vixakha Bouxa--Feast of the Sixth Month.

On the fifteenth day of the crescent moon, the date of the birth, illumination and death of Buddha is celebrated. The series of legends purposing to explain this feast show its complexity. A thorough study is being made at the present time in order to determine its origin and true meaning. In the present state of the question, we will limit ourselves with all reservation to giving the different explanations which we have found in the manuscripts.

We are in the presence of a typical example of a feast of profane nature which the Buddhist tradition is attempting for better or worse to assimilate. According to the Laotian Buddhists, the rockets sent off during this feast are destined to light the funeral pyre which will consume the Buddha's bier. To be precise, no Buddhist text mentions this rite, and the Hit Sip Song Khong Sip Si makes no allusion to this ceremony.

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The different reasons for this feast must therefore be sought. First of all, it takes place at the end of [38] the dry season. It is the last rejoicing before the heavy work of the rice fields. Furthermore, its purpose is well determined, for it is intended to bring on the rains and to assure the fertility of the soil.

The principal element of this manifestation is the rocket. This is a long decorated bamboo which is supposed to represent the body of a Naga, one of its extremities being adorned with a Naga head. As for the multi-colored streamer hanging beneath, it symbolizes the rainbow. This theme, which is also found in Indochina, deserves to be studied in Laos before any comparison can be made. A passage of the history of Thao Kathanam gives us the reason for throwing up rockets in order to obtain rain:

"... the day Thao Kathanam was married to the daughter of the King of Champa there was a great feast. From the summit of Mount Gijjakuta, the Yaksa, Gandharva and Phi launched rockets to celebrate the event. For three days all the rockets rose to the sky where they reached the world of the Catulokapala (the four guardians of the world). The Then (genii) thought that the inhabitants of the earth were throwing fire in order to burn the muong Then. They were troubled by this and went to seek protection from the god Indra. Indra then instigated storms, rain and a devastating wind to destroy these balls of fire. The remains of the rockets fell to earth, caught on the trees and became parasitic plants. Since then, in order to obtain rain, rockets are launched towards the sky to frighten the Then."

But the throwing of rockets is also a competition, and the owner of the rocket which goes furthest is sure of a prosperous year. The Legend of Thao Phadeng and of Nang Ay of the country of the Nagas gives us the origin of this competition.

[39] "The son of the king of the Nagas was the rival of Thao Phadeng for the hand of Nang Ay. The father of Nang Ay did not know to whom to give his daughter, so he advised the two suitors to make some rockets. The one who would launch his rocket the furthest would become the husband of Nang Ay. Thao Phadeng won, but the son of the king of the Nagas would not accept his defeat and decided to obtain Nang Ay dead or alive." Then begins an amazing story in which there is no further question of rockets, and no element which might furnish an explanation.

In this way, the rain brought about by this hurling and competition of rockets will ensure a good harvest. Also to this first ceremony there is grafted a second which is the feast of fecundity.

796 It is not necessary to delay here over the licentious scenes, the songs
83 with words defying decency, the action of special marionettes, all
789 the allusions to the relationship between men and women intended to stimulate the fertility of the earth by sympathetic magic, all of which are well-known rites from classic antiquity up to ancient China. We will refer the reader to the authoritative study on the cycle of The Golden Bough by Sir James Frazer.

796 But what is the exact origin of this feast? Some claim that it is peculiar to Vientiane and has been celebrated in other towns of Laos only within the last twenty years. This comment is of capital interest. For, after the pillaging of Vientiane in 1827 by the Siamese General Phya Bodin, the majority of the population of Vientiane was deported to the right bank of the Mekong. Gradually the town was re-peopled by people coming from Tran-Ninh. Now it is a curious fact that on all the rocket shafts there is a strange decorative design whic is similar to those seen on bracelets and necklaces in the region of Xieng Khouang. Some [40] reliable authors having put out the hypothesis that the designs on these necklaces were the survival of an ancient solar cult, should one conclude that the rockets are the last misunderstood vestiges of an ancient fire worship, formerly practised by the populations of Tran Ninh? But then, at what time and under the influence of what rite, did this fire worship become transformed into a ceremony to obtain rain? The question remains open and perhaps future research and discoveries will give an explanation of this feast which is one of the most original and least known of Laos.

The Sacrifice of the Buffalo.

796 The sacrifice of the buffalo takes place at about the same time
182 as the feast of the rockets. This ceremony is known to all the Indonesian people of southeastern Asia, and its survival in Laos is of the greatest interest in the study of the antecedents of this country.

This ceremony is spread out through the months of May and June when the rainy season begins. It is found in western Laos where, according to a Pali chronicle, a Laotian king of Xieng Mai, who had no faith, adored demons and sacrificed buffaloes to the genii of the woods, the trees, the mountains, etc....

At Vientiane, near the Jules Bosc Avenue, can be seen a large stone which the Laotians worship as being a grain of rice. The buffalo is killed near this stone. A Nang Thyem woman, "inspired or possessed, after a series of invocations and ritual dances, pours water from a teapot onto the stone, while the by-standers flood the same stone with

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[touques].

The experts throw themselves on the stone, turning it over to 182
see if its underside has been wetted. According to the arrangement [187]
of the dry spots, [41] deductions are drawn on the topography of the 243
rice fields which will be flooded, or remain dry, and on the advantage of making rice fields either "high or low."

This sacrifice of the buffalo is found in the myth of Gavampati [189]
the strange monk held aloof by the Buddhist community because he took the attitude of being an enemy of the waters. His death allowed the arrival of the rains.

Khao Vassa (Feast of the Eighth Month). 196

This is the date of the beginning of the Buddhist Lent. During 192
the three months of rains, not being able to go from one place to 183
another preaching, the Buddha and his community retired into the park of the Jetavana. Besides the season of rains, as it awakens life everywhere, causes animals to swarm in great numbers. It is therefore impossible at this time of year to travel without violating, at each step, the precept which forbids the destruction of all existence, however infinitely small it may be. Thus, during this period, the bonzes may not leave the pagoda and are obliged to be present at the general confession.

Oldenberg describes this confession according to the Pali texts as follows:

"No monk may miss it. Only he who is stricken with mental alienation may be dispensed....By the light of a torch, the monks take their places at the place of assembly on low stools which have been prepared for them. Neither laymen nor student bonzes [bonzillons] nor nuns may be present, for the rule of the Order, to be recited in the form of a formula of confession, is considered in principle as a secret appurtenance of the monks only. This formula of confession, the Patimokkgam, is recited aloud by the oldest member [doyen].

.....

"Oh Reverend one, whoever has committed a sin, may he confess it.... After the third time that the question has been repeated, if a monk does not confess a sin which [42] he has committed and which he remembers, he is guilty of an intentional lie. Now an intentional lie, oh reverend one, is an obstacle to religious life. Such are the words of the Blessed One."

Then there follows a list of the sins which must be confessed. At the head of the list are the most serious ones:

796 1. To have had carnal relations with anyone, even an animal.
2. To have stolen the property of others.
3. To have killed.
792 4. To have falsely usurped spiritual perfections, and with the intention of personal profit.

783 Then follows a list of lesser sins. When the enumeration is completed, the reader addresses the monks, repeating three times the following question:

"Now, I ask the reverend ones: Are you free of these sins? And for the second time: Are you pure? And for the third time I ask: Are you pure?" If everyone is silent, the reader says: "The reverend Ones are free of these sins, therefore they are silent, that is how I understand it."

In this way are catalogued in more than two hundred paragraphs, without much order, the precepts dealing with the daily life of the monks, their housing, their food and drink. No detail however irrelevant or insignificant is omitted.

In Laos as in Cambodia "during the entire rainy season, a taper of the Vassa must burn in each pagoda. This consists of a more or less richly carved, painted, wooden cylinder into which is poured virgin wax around a wick" (E. Porée-Maspéro). Before going into retreat, the bonzes are given garments, then the people form a procession and enter the pagodas where they deposit their taper.

196 [43] Ho Khao Padap Dinh--the Feast of the Dead of the Ninth Month

973 This feast is celebrated on the fifteenth day of the waning moon of the ninth month and is accompanied by offerings to the bonzes.

735 A Jataka (Sadhitissaraja) taken from the Ha Sip Xat tells us the benefits acquired by celebrating this feast.

"Two poor devout Buddhist woodcutters sold the produce of their labor and bought two large urns. Into them they put some rice, a few pieces of sugar cane, two bowls, four bananas, some meat and fish, and some delicacies. They offered all this to a bonze on the day of the feast of the dead and vowed to be born again in a better state. As a result of this act of charity they were born again into a royal family. The husband became king and his wife queen. The Buddha then said to those who were listening to this story: "When an act of charity is done for the feast of the dead, one attains three blisses: the terrestrial bliss of being king, the celestial bliss of becoming Indra and finally the supreme bliss of Nirvana."

Ho Khao Slak--The Feast of the Tenth Month. 796 735

This feast is similar to that taking place in Cambodia at the same period. Offerings are made to the bonzes by casting lots. The name of the bonze is written on small tickets which are mixed up in a cup. Each donor offers his present to the monk whose name he has drawn.

The Feasts of the Eleventh Month. 792

The Buddhist Lent finishes on the fifteenth day of the crescent moon of the eleventh month. In each pagoda the bonzes recite the Patimokkha, then confess their sins before leaving the [44] community to go either on a pilgrimage or into a rustic retreat for the period of the dry season. 796

The Offering of Kanthin. During this feast the ceremony of Kanthin takes place. This consists in offering to the bonzes garments, bedding, etc.... 796 735

"When the Buddha was in the Jetavana at Savatthi, some monks came to find him. They were caught by the beginning of Lent and were obliged to stop on their way. When they set out again after the fifteenth day of the crescent moon of the eleventh month, they arrived covered with mud. The Buddha therefore authorized them to accept the gift of garments at the end of Lent." [773]

The Kanthin can only be accepted by a group of at least five bonzes, but the material may not be borrowed of a third or offered on demand. Those who receive a Kanthin must sew its pieces themselves. (Cf. the Laotian bonze).

The Feast of the Waters. 796 773

Other feasts correspond to these purely Buddhist ones. The day before the race of the dugouts the faithful throw into the river small illuminated boats of bamboo or banana wood. Originally lamps were used, consisting of a piece of string dipped in oil, and held up by a banana leaf. This cord was woven at one end in the shape of crows' feet, in memory of the Jataka of the "White Crow."

"A female crow had made its nest at the top of a tree. On the night of a storm the bird died, and its five eggs were carried away by the current. They were gathered by five animals, a hen, an otter, a turtle, a cow, a serpent and gave birth to five buddhas. These buddhas often thought [45] of their mother who was in the heaven of the Tavatimca. She came down to earth in the form of

796 a hermit and said to them: "If you think of your mother, build little
773 illuminated boats and let them be carried away by the current on the fifteenth day of the eleventh month."

This rite is common to all the Asiatic countries of the monsoon. It is found in Lower Burma where it is said to celebrate the victory of the monk Oupagoutta over Mara. It is also practised in Cambodia, southern China at Amoy, in Borneo and in Japan.

Actually we are dealing with what Sir J. Frazer called the expulsion of the emissary he-goat. "These little rafts loaded with offerings attracted the evil genii who had been in contact with the living during the rains. They are driven away on board these frail skiffs." The expulsion of the emissary goat is often accompanied by licentious scenes similar to those of ancient Saturnalia and Bacchanalia.

[526] The race of the dugouts was originally intended to bring about the fall of the waters, but apparently it seems that in Vientiane, in spite of offerings made to the Nagas of the Nam Passak, the original idea has been lost, and the dugout race has become simply a sporting event.

796 The Feasts of the Twelfth Month.
643 When King Asoka had completed the 84,000 shrines which he had built to contain the ashes of the Buddha, he made a great feast of the That on the fifteenth day of the crescent moon of the twelfth month. The feasts of the That Luang are celebrated in memory of this pious deed.

At Vientiane they are preceded by the feast of Vat Si Muong and conclude with those of the Vat Ong Tu [46] and Impeng (see appendix: Vientiane). They always involve the same ceremonial, circumambulation around the pagoda with small sticks of wax and incense, offerings to the bonzes, etc....

The day before the feast of That Luang, on the fourteenth day of the crescent moon, the Great Oath takes place. The king goes to the pagoda of Vat Ong Tu. All the high dignitaries and principal office-holders of the kingdom are present. The bonzes chant the ritual prayers. Two Kha guards in red tunics and green sampots, red berets with a pompon on their heads similar to the headdress worn by warriors represented at the Bayon of Angkor Thom, plunge the points of the sabres, guns and lances into four begging bowls containing lustral water. The master of ceremonies recites the oath written on palm leaves three times. Then the water in which the weapons have been dipped is distributed to the principal dignitaries who drink it.

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Then the royal retinue proceeds to the That Luang where the king must spend the night in a sala. He is accompanied by his ministers and in principle may not leave until they come and fetch him.

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On the morning of the fifteenth day, the king, carried by his guards, goes to make his offerings to the bonzes, and the whole day is devoted to public rejoicing, of which one form deserves to be mentioned. It is the game of the Thi khi.

Its origin, so far as we know at present, remains obscure. The Pra Lak Pra Lam tells us that Indra and Rama played Thi Khi together, and that since that day it has been played at Vientiane.

Let us observe that the game was unknown at Luang Prabang. It was imported from the south. Tradition required that it be played on horseback, when it was played like polo.

At the present time it is played on foot with a stick with the end bent over like a crosier and a ball the size [47] of a child's head and is similar to hockey. There are two opposing sides, the office-holders and the people. The latter should in principle win two victories out of three games. The game has no rules, there is no umpire and no limit to the ground played on. Sometimes the ball goes off into the shrubbery, and all the players go and look for it. Only a hypothetical line indicates the limit of the enemy side. [641]

The feasts of Vat Inpeng and of Vat Ong Tu merely repeat those of Vat Simuong and That Luang.

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THE SECULAR CEREMONIES

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The Sou Khouan can be considered as the transition between the purely religious ceremonies and the secular feasts.

Actually Sou Khouan means "call and reception of the soul." The Laotian has a profound belief in the transmigration of the soul. According to him, the human body is inhabited by thirty-two khouan (spirits) each of whom presides over the function of a member, an organ or an intellectual faculty.

When a human being dies, all of the thirty-two souls leave his body. According to the merits which have been acquired, they go either to the heaven of the gods, or to the province of the dead. Certain beings who have died in an abnormal manner, by suicide, drowning, etc., become wandering souls. They are to be feared, because they return to earth in order to torment the living, and one must make numerous sacrifices to them.

Fig. V. Luang Prabang. The Phou Gneu Gna Gneu (Cl. Bouton). [145]

173: Deydier-62 H,F-3 (no date) 1952 AM1 Indochina AM8